

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 07572 300105Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
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INFO AMCONSUL OPORTO POUCH
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
AMEMBASSY MADRID

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 7572

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PO
SUBJECT: LABOR AGITATION INCREASING

SUMMARY: PORTUGAL'S LABOR SITUATION IS SIMMERING BUT NOT CURRENTLY AT A BOIL. PCP-INSPIRED LABOR AGITATION DESIGNED TO HEAT MATTERS UP IS HAVING SOME EFFECT AMONG WORKERS INCREASINGLY PINCHED BY INFLATION. GOVERNMENT LABOR LEGISLATION HAS HAD AN EFFECT IN IMPROVING DISCIPLINE AND PRODUCTIVITY.
END SUMMARY.

1. AGITATION UP: PCP-INSPIRED LABOR AGITATION INCREASED DURING SEPTEMBER. SEVERAL PCP DEPUTIES TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY HAVE BECOME INVOLVED IN INDIVIDUAL LABOR DISPUTES. THE COMMUNIST PRESS CONTINUES TO GIVE PROMINENCE TO THE EFFECTS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC POLICIES ON THE WORKERS AND TO TURN WORKER DISCONTENT TO PCP ADVANTAGE.

2. NOT AN ALL OUT EFFORT: IN SPITE OF PCP EFFORTS TO STIR UP THE LABOR CAULDRON, OVERALL LABOR PRODUCTIVITY AND DISCIPLINE ARE CONTINUING TO IMPROVE. A NEW STRIKE LAW AND DECREES ALLOWING FIRMS DECLARED TO BE IN ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES TO DISMISS EXCESS WORKERS HAVE HAD EFFECT OF DISCOURAGING

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WORK STOPPAGES AS WORKERS BECOME INCREASINGLY CONCERNED WITH HOLDING THEIR JOBS. OFFICIAL STATISTICS ARE UNAVAILABLE BUT AN UNOFFICIAL SURVEY REPORTEDLY INDICATES THAT PORTUGAL'S TIME LOST DUE TO STRIKES IS NOW LESS THAN MOST OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

3. STRIKE AT LISNAVE: RECENT MAJOR PCP EFFORT WAS TO IMPOSE A TWO-HOUR STRIKE SEPTEMBER 28 AT LISNAVE AND SETENAVE

SHIPIARDS IN PROTEST AGAINST THE EXPECTED REELECTION OF JOSE MANUEL DE MELO AS PRESIDENT OF LISNAVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. RESULTS WERE MIXED. STRIKE WENT OFF UNEVENTFULLY WITH A NEAR TOTAL SHUTDOWN BUT A SIZABLE PERCENTAGE OF WORKERS DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN UNION'S MASS MEETINGS. SYMPATHY STRIKES IN SETUBAL AND A NUMBER OF OTHER LISBON INDUSTRIAL BELT FACTORIES HAD MUCH LOWER DEGREE OF PARTICIPATION. STRIKE IS NOT EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE ITS ANNOUNCED OBJECTIVE OF IMPEDING REELECTION OF DE MELO, BUT DID PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR CGTP MUSCLE FLEXING AND TO TEST WORKER REACTION.

4. CGTP-INTERSINDICAL ANNIVERSARY: PREPARATIONS ARE CONTINUING FOR NUMEROUS OBSERVANCES OF THE SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CGTP-INTERSINDICAL LABOR CONFEDERATION OCTOBER 1. THE CGTP IS CONTINUING TO DOWNPLAY ITS POLITICAL TIES TO THE PCP AND CONCENTRATING ON THEMES OF WIDE APPEAL--PROTESTS AGAINST PRICE INCREASES, JOB SECURITY, AND LABOR UNITY.
COMMENT: INFLATION, WIDESPREAD UNEMPLOYMENT, AND A GROWING DISILLUSIONMENT WITH THE GOP'S ECONOMIC POLICIES, ARE GRADUALLY MAKING THE WORKERS MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO PAT SOLUTIONS OFFERED BY EITHER THE FAR LEFT OR RIGHT.
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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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PCP-INSPIRED LABOR AGITATION DESIGNED
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